

41 6-1776

THE
PERNICIOUS CONSEQUENCES
Of Replacing
Denver-Dam and Sluices, &c.

CONSIDER'D;
In a LETTER to
Mr. John Leaford.

Wherein his Arguments contained in a
Pamphlet entitled, *Observations, &c.*
are fairly and candidly examined.

BY
WILLIAM ELSTOBB, Jun^r.

R.

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TO
Sir JOHN TURNER, Bar^t.
AND
EDWARD BACON, Esq;
The Representatives in Parliament;
WALTER KIRBY, Esq; Mayor,
HENRY PATRIDGE, Esq; Recorder,
AND THE
Aldermen and Common-Council
OF
King's-Lynn in Norfolk.

GENTLEMEN,

THE ensuing Pages having Relation to Matters of *Navigation* and *Draining*, (an Affair in which the CORPORATION you govern is so largely interested) I thought it my Duty to submit it to your Patronage, embracing with Pleasure the Opportunity it gives me of paying my most dutiful Respects to You.

+ *William Elstobb, Jun^r.*

TO
ST JOHN TURNER, Esq.

AND
EDWARD BACON, Esq.

The Representatives in Parliament;

WALTER BAKER, Esq. Mayor,

WALTER BAKER, Esq. Recorder,

Albion and Common Council

King's-Lynn in Norfolk.

GENTLEMEN,
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. in relation to the matter of the proposed extension of the railway (as stated in which the extension you propose is to be carried out) I thought it my duty to inform you of the progress of the Government in this matter and to send you my most desired respects to you.

WILLIAM ELLIS, Junr.

My very good FRIEND,

I Have now in my Hands a Pamphlet of yours, entitled, *Some Observations, &c. &c.* which I have impartially perused; for not having any *Self-Interest* in the Case, I have endeavoured to make TRUTH, and the PUBLICK GOOD, the *sole Directors* of my Judgment: I shall beg Leave to lay before you, such *Remarks* as have occurred to me, upon the Perusal of your Treatise.

In Page 10 you say, "That the *South-Level*, "being much the lowest Part of the GREAT "LEVEL, was, before the Year 1650 (that is "before the *Hundred-Foot Drain* was made) in "wet Seasons, very much incommoded with "Water, for want of proper Banks." Here you mention an *Evil*, and the *Cause* of that Evil, and, consequently, point out a Remedy; which is very right, and had it been applied no Doubt but there would have been Benefit received from it. But you afterwards tell us this Remedy was *impracticable*, and therefore some *other* was necessary, to be substituted in its Room. Well; what must now be done? Why Sir *Cornelius Vermudyn's* Scheme must be put in Execution, the *Hundred-Foot Drain* must be cut, the *Hermitage Sluice* put down, and the *Ouze-Waters* must be diverted from their *antient Course*, and turned down this *new Drain*, assisted with all its Appendages. All these Things ARE DONE; what is the Effect? Are the Waters prevented from incommoding the *South-Level* in wet Seasons? Is the *South-Level* better drained in wet Seasons than heretofore? The Answer to these Questions you have

B given

given in Page 11, where you say, “ The *Ouze-*
 “ *Waters* being turned down the said New Cut,
 “ they ran through the same with such Rapidity,
 “ that in the Time of Floods, they over-rode the
 “ Waters of the *Grant*, that came down the old
 “ Course of the *Ouze*, where they met at *Denver*,
 “ and thereby reverted in an awkward Manner up
 “ the said old Course into the *South-Level*, and
 “ there expanded themselves over the same, for
 “ want of proper Banks, till the Water in that
 “ Level rose to an equal Height with those that
 “ came down the *Hundred-Foot Cut*, and then
 “ they would drain off to Sea together.”

Observe now, before the *Hundred-Foot Cut* was made, in wet Seasons, the Water expanded itself over the *South-Level*, for want of proper Banks; What did it do after? The very same Thing.

The *Hundred-Foot Drain*, which, you say, was made at a vast Expence, according to your own Account, answered no Purpose at all in respect to securing or draining the *South-Level*, the proper Remedy was still wanting, viz. *proper Banks*. But these are still impracticable, therefore *Denver-Sluice* must be erected, to prevent the *Hundred-Foot Waters*, in wet Seasons, from reverting into the *South-Level*, and occasioning the Water to expand itself over the same.

Observe the *Purpose*: In two Years after the *Hundred-Foot* was made, *Denver-Sluice*, it seems, was compleated. And in Page 13 you say, “ It
 “ seemed to answer the Intent in every Respect;
 “ except only when there happened to come any
 “ Floods down the *Hundred-Foot*, then the same
 “ would keep the *Sluice-Doors* shut, and thereby
 “ obstruct

“ obstruct the Waters of the *South-Level* in their
 “ Passage, until they rose to be higher above the
 “ Sluice than those below, and then they would
 “ force the Sluice open, and gain Passage through
 “ the same.”

You say, *Denver-Sluice*, seemed to answer the Intent, except as above. That is except, in *wet Seasons*, the Water in the *South-Level* was obliged to rise higher, than the Water at *Denver-Sluice*; which came down the *Hundred-Foot Cut*; which was exactly the very same Thing it was obliged to do before the *Sluice* was erected. The *Sluice* therefore, answered no Purpose, in respect to preventing the Expansion of the Water over the *South-Level* in *wet Seasons*, which was the Thing intended by it, and which is the very Thing, contained in your Exception. And what you say, must amount to this, that the Sluice seemed to answer the Intent in *every Respect*, except the *very Thing for which it was purposed*; and that remained *unaffected*, and the *proper*, (and I fear the *only*, Remedy) was yet wanting, viz. *proper Banks*.

These two, viz. the *Hundred-Foot* and *Denver-Sluice*, having thus failed, and the proper Remedy being still *impracticable*, another Effort must be made, and *St. John's Eau* must be cut. Well; in Page 14, you tell us this was done with great *Success*. “ The Tides and the *Hundred-Foot Waters* (when they *over-rode* those of the “ *Ouze*) were kept out of the *South-Level*, and so “ continued for upwards of *Sixty Years*; and thus “ the Low-Lands there, became secure Summer- “ Lands, to the great Advantage of the Owners “ and Occupiers thereof.”

By this I suppose you would have it understood, that the State of the *South-Level* in general, was better, in the Period of this *Sixty Years*, than it had been before the Year 1650, in which the *Hundred-Foot Cut* was begun. For if otherwise, the State of the *South-Level* was not better in that Period, while all the Works for amending of it, remained compleat; it consequently follows, that the *vast Expences* of these Works, might as well have been *saved*.

This Fact, therefore, ought to be particularly examined, and set in its *true Light*. From my own Observation I must confess, I can say nothing of this Affair; the Thing is too *early* for my Notice, and a considerable Part of it, I think, must be *beyond* the Limit of your's. The only Recourse that can be had, must be to *History*, and *authentick Testimonies*, from which I shall, with the utmost Brevity, endeavour to state the Fact, in as clear a Light as I can put it into.

But before I proceed to Quotations, I must observe that you have thrown a strong Suspicion upon it yourself, in Page 15, where you say, "There was a general Complaint (and not without Reason) among the Navigators, who suggested that the said Sluice (that is *Denver-Sluice*) obstructed Navigation, prevented the draining the *South-Level*, and very soon would occasion the Out-Fall to be filted up, whereby the Haven of *Lynn* would be lost."

If this Complaint was just, and the Out-fall was filted up, more than before these Works were executed, so as to endanger the Loss of *Lynn-Haven*, I think, there is great Reason to suspect, that

that the Condition of the *South-Level* could not be much mended; and I cannot help being afraid, that you boast more of the Success of *St. John's Eau*, than you ought, in Reason, to do; however, Suspicion being no Proof, I shall now proceed to examine *Facts*.

“ Mr. *Richard Atkins* an eminent Commissioner of Sewers, whose Manuscripts have always been allowed in Evidence, gives an account of the state of the *South-Level* in the year 1604, from a Survey thereof taken by him, the particulars of which, you may meet with, in *Badslade's History*, (p. 74, 75, 76, 77, 78.) by which it appears, that the *Fens* in the *South-Level* were, the best Part of them, *River Meadow*; and the worst, *Summer Lands*. And the Demands made by the first *Undertakers* for *Draining*, and the Conditions, upon which the *Corporation of Adventurers*, accepted the Undertaking, prove the same thing; (see *Badslade*, p. 78, 79, in 1618.) Sir *Clement Edmonds* one of the Clerks of the Privy Council, from a general view taken of the *Fenns* and *Outfalls*, did report to the Lords of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, amongst other things, as followeth:

“ The River *Ouze* coming along by the Town of *Bedford*, *Huntingdon*, and *St. Ives*, and so passing down to his outfall at *Lynn*, is a goodly fair River throughout; and from below *Ely* downward, runneth with such a Current, that it is absolutely the best *Sewer* of all that Country.— And the Country, all along that River side, both in *Cambridgeshire* and the *Isle*, being a very rich Soil, and well inhabited, is not otherwise

“ otherwise much troubled with Waters but in
 “ *Winter*, and in *time of Floods*, occasioned by the
 “ Waters being stopped, between *Huntingdon* and
 “ *Ely*, by *Weeds, Wares, Hards, &c.* and by the
 “ River being made shallow against *Ely*, and other
 “ parts by Gravels and Fords, which ought to be
 “ removed for the readier Passage of the Water
 “ in time of Floods, &c. &c. *Badslade*, p. 72,
 73.

The good Condition of the several parts of the *South-Level* before the Works for Draining were executed, does likewise appear by Petitions presented to Parliament, from the Towns of *Lakenbeath, Feltwell, Methwold, and Northwold*.

Part of that from *Lakenbeath*, which was signed by above sixty Inhabitants, was as followeth.

“ Your Petitioners had in use about 5700 Acres
 “ of common Fenns, and their principal Subsis-
 “ tance was, by the said Fenns; which was not
 “ hurtfully surrounded Grounds, but such as have
 “ been beneficial to us by overflowing. Above
 “ 1400 Acres of our said Fenns, are Pasture for
 “ Sheep in the hardest time of Winter, they be-
 “ ing never drowned (but upon extraordinary
 “ Wind-catches) and then we have reaped most
 “ Profit from them in the Summer following.

To much the same purport are the rest of the Petitions beforementioned, which for Brevity sake, I shall not transcribe, but refer you to *Badslade*. Page 80, 81.

I shall therefore only trouble you with one or two, since the works for Draining have been executed; see page 83 of the aforesaid Author.

“ *The*

*" The Petition of the Inhabitants of the Hundred
 " of Clackclose in Norfolk.*

Sheweth,

*" That, &c.— That of late Years, since the
 " placing a great Dam and Sluice cross the River
 " Ouze near Salter's-lode, and other Works, made
 " by the Adventurers for draining the Level; the
 " River Ouze is raised so high with Silt from the
 " Sea, that not only the antient Drains and Out-
 " falls are thereby stopped and become of little
 " Use, but also the Waters of the said Level,
 " being by the said Sluice and Dam, and other
 " Works penned up, and restrained, and diverted
 " from their antient Course, upon every Flood
 " or Downfall do swell and overflow your Peti-
 " tioner's Lands, and cannot be gotten off; where-
 " by they often lie drowned, and are of no bene-
 " fit the whole Year, &c.*

To the same effect were the Petitions to the Parliament, 1696.

From the Owners and Occupiers of Lands in the several Towns of *Ely, Sutton, Stretham, Thetford, Northwold, Methwold, Feltwell, Hockwell, Wilton, Brand, Wainford, Lakenbeath, Effewell, Isleham, Wellington, Barton, and Mildenhall*, in the Counties of *Cambridge, Suffolk and Norfolk*, and within the *South Part* of the great Level of the Fens call'd **BEDFORD-LEVEL**. And,

The Case of the *Land-holders and Inhabitants* of more than *Sixty Towns and Parishes*, lying within, and bordering upon the Fens of *Bedford-Level*; among other Complaints,

Sheweth,

Sheweth,

“ That the publick Banks and Drains which
 “ the Adventurers stand obliged to maintain for
 “ the common safety of the Level, have for divers
 “ Years been neglected and suffered to be in de-
 “ cay; whereby, on every small Flood, great
 “ part of the said Level, hath been yearly over-
 “ flown, and for several years been in a far worse
 “ Condition than they were before the Under-
 “ taking.

“ That the *Middle*, and *South-Level* besides
 “ vast Damages in former Years, have by the
 “ Floods this present Year 1665, been, and still
 “ are, entirely drowned; and your Petitioners
 “ have yearly sustained losses in Cattle, Stock,
 “ Corn and Provisions, to the value of one hun-
 “ dred thousand Pounds and upwards, to the utter
 “ ruin of great numbers of the said Inhabitants.

“ That the Lands of the *South-Level*, which
 “ alone can pretend to receive benefit from the
 “ Sluice at *Denver Dam*, are of far less Value,
 “ than the Land adjoining to the said Level,
 “ which are, and divers Years past have been,
 “ overflowed and damaged by their means; and
 “ the said *South-Level* in general hath been in
 “ worse Condition since, than it was before the
 “ erecting *Denver-Sluices*.

“ Thus the Sluices of *Denver* are agreed on all
 “ sides to be the cause of PREJUDICE to *Drain-*
 “ *ing*, as well as *Navigation*. *Badslade*, p. 83.

Thus you see, contrary to what you would
 insinuate, it appears very plainly, that the *State*
 of the *South-Level* was worse after the *Adventur-*
ers Works were executed than before, notwith-
 standing

standing St. *John's Eau*, was, at the same time, to be numbered amongst *them*. But because you impute so much to the GREAT SUCCESS of that *Drain*, I shall inform you what the fore-cited Author says upon it, p. 82.

“ The Adventurers finding these Sluices (that is *Denver Sluices*, &c.) had so ill effect upon the *South-Level*, (for whose benefit alone, they were designed, saith my Lord *Gorges* and Sir *William Dugdale*) and observing that the River on *Lynn side* of the Sluices was *silted up* 10 Foot, which growing up of the River was a GREAT OBSTACLE to *Draining*, they, Anno 1653, cut *Downham Eea* alias St. *John's Eea*, &c. &c.

“ And because of this ten foot Choak, the Adventurers found themselves under a necessity also, to cut a *new Drain*, on the *West side* of the *Ouze* out of *Well-Creek*, to fall into the *Ouze* a little below *Stow-Bridge*, called *Tong's Drain*, or *Marshland-Cutt*, to convey the Waters out of the *Middle-Level*; which before the ten Foot Choak, fell into the *Ouze* at *Salter's-load*, whereabouts, there was before *Denver Sluices* were erected, a fall of ten Foot from the Soil of the *Fenns* to *Low-water Mark*, in the River *Ouze*.

“ Immediately after these two Drains, viz. *Downham Eea* and *Tong's Drain* were made, the River *Ouze* grew up, and the Sands encreased, more between *Salter's-load* and *Stow-Bridge*, than in any other part of the River, occasioned chiefly by *Downham Eea*, &c. &c.

“ So that the River continued to silt up so very fast, that in about three years time after

“ the making *Downham Eea*, its Outfall was
 “ choaked up and lost, and the *Eea* was dammed
 “ up, and the Bridge at *Stow*, which had been
 “ built over it, was taken down to save the charge
 “ of maintaining it, and instead thereof a Road
 “ made cross it. And *Downham Eea* was of no
 “ use till 1666, then the 24 foot Drain was let
 “ into it, which was cut from *Soam-Meare* for
 “ draining it by Tunnels, under three Rivers.
 “ But now those Tunnels are stopped up, and the
 “ *Eea* is rendered again of little or no Use, the
 “ bottom of the *Ouze* being higher than the sole
 “ of the *Sluice* next the *Ouze*, and also as high as
 “ the Soil of the *Fenns*.

“ Thus in the Course of a very few Years,
 “ those very Works which were designed to *drain*
 “ the *Fenns*, (particularly the *South-Level*) and to
 “ have made them *good Winter Land*, did the Re-
 “ verse, *i. e.* absolutely drowned the *Level*, now
 “ no longer *Summer Land*. And in p. 89. He
 says thus,

“ For tho’ *St. John’s Eea*, was made for a flaker
 “ to the *Scuth-Level*; yet because the River *Ouze*
 “ was choaked up, and its Bottom raised high with
 “ Sands, the Waters of *St. John’s Eea* were ob-
 “ structed and hindered from getting to Sea. So that
 “ that Cutt, which cost a vast Sum of Money,
 “ became of no use to convey any Waters off the
 “ *South-Level* to Sea. And while it was of no
 “ Service to the *Level*, it proved prejudicial to the
 “ contiguous Lands without the *Level*; for the
 “ Waters that came into it out of the *Fenns*, ran
 “ over its Banks, and drowned the adjacent Coun-
 “ try; which was, before *St. John’s Eea* was
 “ made

“ made, rich Meadow and Pasture Land, and
 “ continually dry, but since, almost continually
 “ drowned.

Where now is the GREAT SUCCESS of St. *John's Eau* to be found? is that Drain, which occasioned the River between *Salter's-load* and *Stow-bridge* to fill up, FASTER THAN BEFORE, so that in *three years Time*, it had its own outfall CHOAKED up, such a *mighty* thing to be boasted of, for its Service in *Draining*? Is that, which instead of DRAINING, proved the DROWNING of a *Country*, to be thus *highly commended*? or can it be right or reasonable to recommend such Schemes and Works, as have, by *fair Trial* and *Experiment*, been found *prejudicial* to the LAND-INTEREST, *hurtful* to DRAINING, *destructive* to NAVIGATION, and *ruinous* to TRADE?

Such I fear, is the Scheme which you have lately proposed to the Hon^{ble} Corporation of *Adventurers*.

For if the *Tides* are STOPPED at *Denver Sluice*, as heretofore when the Sluices there were standing, and if St. *John's Eau* be again opened, and the *Waters* of the *South-Level* are again *diverted* from passing through that part of the River which lies between the said *Sluice* and *Stow-Bridge*, What should, or can, hinder it from *choaking* and *filling up*, as heretofore when in *exactly* the same Circumstances.

You do indeed propose an Expedient to prevent the frequent interruption of the Navigation through the *South-Level*, which is very well for so long a Time as that Navigation is practicable at all: But as the *filling up* of that part of the

River (not to mention any others) and St. *John's Eau*, will in Time, (and I fear in a *very short* Time, too) as certainly happen as it has before happened, what will then become of *Navigation*, of *Draining*, or of the *Fenns*? DESOLATION and RUIN, must attend them!

These Cautions, I hope, will make you consider well before you press your Scheme; which there is so much Reason to fear, will be *highly prejudicial* to that Cause, which I believe, you sincerely aim to promote, viz. *Draining* and *Improving* of the *Fenns*.

I shall now just turn my Eye upon the state of Navigation in the River *Ouze*, &c. before and since the Undertaking of the *Adventurers*.

And from the same Author I have all along quoted, it appears, that from the Year 1292 in the Reign of *Edward* the First, down to the time of Undertaking the *Draining of the Fenns*, the general Complaints from *Marshland*, and other Places, contiguous to the *Outfall* of the *Ouze* were, of the *continual Increase* of the said River, both in *Width* and *Depth*, and the DAMAGES done to their *Banks*, and the *Danger* of their Lands thereby; which is set forth in many Petitions at different Times, presented to Parliament for Redress of those Grievances; but for fear of hurting Navigation in its improving Condition, very little regard was had thereto, as may be seen more at large, p. 6, 7. of *Baslade's Hist.*

But after the Works of the *Adventurers* were carried into execution, the Complaints ran in another Style, The *Choaking up* of the River, the *Stoppage* of the *Outfalls*, the *drowned condition* of the
the

the Lands, by the filting up of the Mouths of their Drains, and the Ruin of Navigation, are now the sad Matter of their Complaints and Petitions, as appears in Page 60 and elsewhere in the said Author.

“ In 1645 the River at *Lynn* was in *Breadth*
 “ about a *Furlong*, and the Ships did that Year
 “ ride at *Anchor* at the *South End* of the Town,
 “ and the *West Side* of the River in two *Fathom*
 “ at *Low-Water*; having then such strong Tides,
 “ that they were often forced to moore with a
 “ Stream-Cable, which is one extraordinary, to
 “ hold them fast.

“ One Mile below the Town at *the Crutch*,
 “ for several Years, there was 12 *Feet* Depth, at
 “ *Low-Water*.

“ In the *Channel* amongst the Sands, to Sea-
 “ ward there were two good Channels, one call-
 “ ed the *East*, the other the *West*, Channel; in
 “ which the biggest Ships drawing 13 or 14 Foot
 “ Water, failed up and down, as well on the *Neip*,
 “ as on the *Spring-Tides*.

“ At the lower End of these Channels, over
 “ against *Kitcham*, were two good Roads, the
 “ one called *Fielne*, which the *West* Channel
 “ runs into, the other *Terrier in the East*, in which
 “ Roads was three and a half *Fathom* at *Low-*
 “ *Water* in the Year 1645, which was before the
 “ erecting *Denver-Sluices*.

“ About the Year 1660, which was after the
 “ Sluices were erected, the Road on the *West Side*
 “ of the River grew so *shallow* that no Ships could
 “ ride; the Channel by the Town much shallower,
 “ —That between *Common-Staith* and *St. Ann's*,
 “ dried

“ dried up. — The Road at the *Crutch* had but 9
 “ *Foot Water*. — The *West Channel* and Road of
 “ *Feilne* much worse than formerly.

“ In the Year 1675 and 1676 the *West Chan-*
 “ *nel* was grown up, and *Feilne Road* lost, so that
 “ Ships had no other Road than *Ferrier*, which
 “ was then much *shallower* than in former Years.

“ From the Year 1675 to this present Year
 “ 1696, from the South End of *Lynn* to *Ferrier*
 “ *Road* the *River* and *Channel* hath from Year to
 “ Year gradually grown *worse* and *worse*. The
 “ Road at the *Crutch*, having now but *three Foot*
 “ *Water* at *Low-Water*; and on Neip-Tides a
 “ Ship of nine Foot Draught cannot sail from
 “ Town, nor indeed upon a Spring-Tide if the
 “ Wind be contrary.

“ A Ship of 12 Feet Draught cannot come
 “ from *Ferrier Road*, but must lye by the Way,
 “ for want of Water; where the Sands are so bad
 “ that no Ship is able to bear her Burden, but
 “ breaks in Pieces; as by Experience of many
 “ Ships in Town that have come to great Da-
 “ mages, from 100*l.* to 400*l.* *per Ship*, some
 “ rendered incapable of going more to Sea.

“ And all the Houses between *Common Staith*
 “ and *St. Ann's*, are become little worth for want
 “ of Water, there being now a great *Sand* where
 “ formerly there was 10 Foot Water at *Low-*
 “ *Water-Mark*.

“ The Occasion of this *River*, *Channel*, and
 “ *Road* growing up, as plainly appears, is the
 “ *Sluices* that are built 15 or 16 Miles above *Lynn*,
 “ which not only stop the Out-let of the *River*
 “ that extends 40 Miles above the *Sluices*, but
 “ stops

“ stops the Passage of the Tide of Flood which
 “ comes out of the Sea : for it is observable by
 “ us, whose Hands are hereunto subscribed, (to
 “ which if requested we are ready to give our
 “ Oaths;) That in the Years aforesaid, before the
 “ Sluices were built, there did not only run such
 “ a *strong Ebb-Tide* that we could *scarcely bold the*
 “ *Ships fast*; but also a *Flood-Tide, as strong and*
 “ *vehement as the Ebb*: Which Tide of Flood
 “ then ran full *five Hours and a Half*, &c. &c.

“ The Truth of what is here laid open, is cor-
 “ roborated by innumerable Witneses, the Names
 “ of some of which are as under :

“ *Edward Elsdon*, aged 72, hath known the
 “ Haven and Channel 50 Years and upwards,
 “ having been a Ship-Master here for great Part
 “ of that Time.

“ *Thomas Nuttingham*, aged 73, hath known
 “ this Haven and Channel 50 Years.

“ *Edward Masón*, aged 72, hath known this
 “ Haven and Channel 50 Years.

“ *John Fuller*, aged 57, hath known this Ha-
 “ ven and Channel 43 Years.

“ *William Fuller*, aged 52, hath known this
 “ Haven and Channel 37 Years.

“ *Edmund Quash*, aged 46, hath known this
 “ Haven and Channel 30 Years.

“ And they say—That before the Sluices were
 “ erected and made cross the River *Ouze*, near
 “ *Salter's-Lode*, the Channel to Sea was so deep
 “ and open, that there was *two Fathoms Water*
 “ at the same Place and Time of Tide, where there
 “ is now not above *two Foot Water*; and so in
 “ Proportion for many Miles together :

“ That

“ That the Tide before the said Sluices were
 “ erected, usually flowed above *five Hours*, where
 “ it now floweth not above *three Hours*, &c. &c.

“ *John Attleson*, aged 80 Years, or thereabout,
 “ for 60 Years and upwards hath known the
 “ River *Ouze*, and all the Rivers falling into the
 “ same, &c. &c. And he saith, That *before the*
 “ *erecting the Sluices*, near *Salter's-Lode* all the
 “ Rivers were free and open, and received such
 “ Quantities of Water by the Flood from Sea,
 “ that *large Barges*, and Vessels with from 26
 “ to 30 Chaldron of Coals did constantly pass,
 “ with great Ease, up to *Cambridge Town*.

“ That before the erecting the said Sluices at
 “ *Harrimer* beyond *Ely*, the River was at least
 “ five Foot deeper than now it is; and where
 “ large *Boats* and *Barges* usually passed, in the
 “ old adjacent River, *Grass* and *Fodder* is now
 “ mown and cut.

“ That since the said Sluices were erected, all
 “ the Rivers are so *shallow* and *grown up*, that
 “ where the said *Barges* did usually pass, now
 “ flat-bottom Lighters with 8 or 10 Chalder of
 “ Coals cannot pass, without great Difficulty and
 “ Charge, and Delay, for want of Water, &c. &c.

“ That where, in the River between *Lynn-*
 “ *Haven*, and *Salter's-Lode*, great *Barges* and
 “ *Keels* used to pass at *Low-Water*, such Vessels
 “ cannot now pass at *High-Water*, so as such
 “ *Barges* and *Keels* have been left off and disused
 “ for twenty Years past. And all this is assert-
 “ for Truth by

“ *Richard Allen*, aged 75, who hath known
 “ the said Rivers for 60 Years.

“ *John*

“ *John Curle*, aged 76 Years, who hath known
“ it for 40 Years.

“ *William Walwyn*, aged 63 Years, hath known
“ d^o 50 Years.

“ *Thomas Chiles*, aged 63 Years, who hath
“ known d^o 46 Years.

“ *Francis Lord*, aged 66 Years, who hath
“ known d^o 46 Years.

“ *John Chiles*, aged 64 Years, who hath known
“ d^o 46 Years.

From all these things, I think it must be evident to every impartial Person, that the state of the *South-Level* and the *Navigation* of the River *Ouze* instead of being ASSISTED and IMPROVED, have been HURT and PREJUDICED by the *Works of the Adventurers*, undertaken for the *draining* of that *Level*. And your Scheme for *replacing* a DAM, and SLUICES at *Denver*, and opening *St. John's Eau*, is I think, as *demonstrably wrong* and *improper* as *Experiment*, and *fair Trial*, can make a Thing.

There is one Thing further I shall beg leave to observe, which is, that, these *Mischiefs* and *Hurts* to *Navigation* and *Draining* were not unexpected nor unforeseen; but were predicted and foretold, from the *Nature* and *Analogy* of Things, by the *Corporation of Lynn* and others, who *remonstrated* very much against them, before they were put in Execution (as may be seen in divers Places in the forecited Author) and *foretold* the very *Mischiefs*, which, afterwards, *actually* happened by them.

Can any Thing more demonstrate the Impropriety of these Schemes than this? Or can your's
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which is of the very same kind, be now thought reasonable and proper? — Surely No!

There perhaps, may be some, who will be apt to say, it is easier to *object* against a *Scheme* than to *project* one, to *stop* a good Work than to *contrive* one, and therefore they may be desirous to know, whether I can propose any thing that may be more advantageous.

In answer to this I have to say, that I pretend not to Scheming; And *Colonel Armstrong*, (whose Abilities, will in this Case, hardly be questioned by any) has already proposed a Scheme (which is too well known to need repeating) and if executed, in my Opinion, will entirely answer the End; that is, DRAIN the *South-Level*, and IMPROVE the *Navigation* of the Port of *Lynn*.

But if this Scheme should be thought too expensive, or in part, impracticable at this Juncture; I would humbly propose, that at present, *but a Part* of it should be put in Execution, *viz.*

That the *Foundation* of *Denver Sluice* (which was made *eight Feet* higher than the Bottom of the River, when it was put down) be removed, and the River at that Place, enlarged to its *antient Breadth*; that the *Cambridge-River* above the said *Sluice* and all the *leading Drains* coming into it, be every where *sufficiently embanked*, where it is at present practicable, leaving, for a while, the other Parts, in the state which they are now in, and letting the *Hundred-Foot River*, continue as it now is.

The effect of this Scheme, I think, will be this. The *Foundation* of *Denver Sluice*, (which is now a *perfect Dam* in that River) being removed, and the

the River being as much *embanked*, as it can at present be; in the time of *Floods* and *wet Seasons*, after the *Hundred-Foot Waters* are a little *abated*, the Waters of the *South-Level*, running off to Sea, and being, in some Measure, confined between the Banks proposed now to be made, they will soon *scour out the Silt*, lodged in the place where that Foundation stands at present, and reduce the bottom of the River there, to its *ANTIENT DEPTH*, that is *eight or ten Feet deeper*, than it at present is; and this will be an addition of so much more Fall from the said *South-Level*. The *Hundred-Foot Waters*, at their first Descent, in the time of *Floods*, will be more confined from *spreading over that Level*, than *now* they are, and will be *something the sooner* turned down to Sea, which will so much the more contribute to the *scouring out* of the Channel below. The *Spring-Tides* likewise, will be better confined than they now are, and a *greater* quantity of *Ebb-Water* forced back to Sea than now is.

And all these Things *co-operating* together, will, I think, in a few Years, reduce the Bottom of the Channel below the said *Sluice to Lynn*, to it's antient Depth: by which Means, the *Waters* of the *Hundred-Foot*, will pass off *more freely*, towards *Lynn*, and not *revert* so much into the *South-Level* as they now do, and those Lands, on which it is now *impracticable* to form *Banks*, will, by the *Recovery* of this *Fall*, be so far drained, as to be capable of *Embanking*; and thus in a *few Years* Time the *whole South-Level* may be recovered, and that, in such a Manner, that the *EXPENCE* will be *hardly felt*.

Thus I have, very *freely*, and *impartially*, given You my Sentiments upon the Matter, and if any Thing which I have said should PREVENT any *Injury*, or POINT OUT any Thing that may be serviceable and beneficial to *Navigation* and *Drain- ing*, it will answer the End and satisfy the Wishes of

Your sincere and respectful Friend,

William Elstobb, *Junr.*



